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INTERVIEWEES: Harry Farrell
Bob Hallman

SUBJECT: Development of San Jose

INTERVIEWER: Jan Hutchins, Jan Black's Journal, KCBS

TRANSCRIBER: Evelyn K. Cannon, SJHM Volunteer

Introduction: Our guests are Harry Farrell, former political writer and editor at the San Jose Mercury, and Bob Hallman, KCBS morning weather and traffic expert and long-time Santa Clara Valley resident and reporter. Welcome, gentlemen, thank you for your time. Before we go back into history, let's talk about the present. We're broadcasting here from the lobby of the luxurious new Fairmont Hotel in San Jose, a symbol of the city's growth.

JH = Jan Hutchins

HF = Harry Farrell

BH = Bob Hallman

JH How important and powerful is San Jose now, Bob.

BH Well, San Jose is a very powerful and important city. I can remember when United Airlines had the very first flight out of here to JFK in New York and I had gone back on the flight and it was a one-a-day flight. We always had service, some sort of service, between Los Angeles and here, but it was a United DC-8 to Kennedy. And on my

return flight they were calling the flight and announcing United's -- I don't remember the number of the flight -- going to San Jose, California, non-stop service to San Jose, California, and there was a fellow standing next to me said, "San Jose where?" (laughter) He'd never even heard of it. But that was before the Silicon Valley and the eruption of the high tech and all that. San Jose was well-known around the world for a lot of things before then but never the way that it's evolved now into this high-tech mastery of really United States technology. We over the years were watching this place grow and it was growing in a different form when I started as a news reporter, which was in 1965, and all the way up through the '70s agribusiness was the biggest business in Santa Clara County. And it wasn't until the late '70s really that we finally started to change and in a way agribusiness was driven from the county. There were some people who were in government and in power around here who didn't think that was a good image and as a result many canneries left here. It wasn't just that the fruit removed to the Valley, it was also that the image of San Jose, a lot of leaders felt, wasn't really put best forward by agriculture. Harry Farrell, who's with us today, was telling me who was here when Krushchev was here, Krushchev visited here. What did they give him, Harry?

HF Well now, Nikita Krushchev came through here in 1959 on his big, really one of the first, breaks of the Cold War when a leader of the Soviet Union would come to California. And when he came through here, although his main goal here was to see the IBM plant which was part of the new era, what they gave him was the traditional box of dried prunes (laughter). Now that's 1959, then you go almost a quarter of a century later and Queen Elizabeth comes through and of course they gave her a computer or at least Dave Packard gave her a computer.

BH Dave Packard gave her a computer. But that was the change and the significant change from giving Nikita Krushchev the prunes and then giving the Queen a computer so you can see how the change took place.

JH Harry, Bob talked about how the political leaders had an influence on making the change and controlling what San Jose became. Have politicians traditionally been operating in the best interests of the Valley?

HF I think probably in the long haul yes, I really do. The one that always comes to mind when you're talking in this context is Dutch Hamann, who was City Manager here from 1950 to, I'm guessing now, about 1969. He was about 19 years and I think he was City Manager longer than anyone

else ever was and he was basically a salesman and he took over the city when it was -- well the population in the 1950 census was about 95,000 -- and by the time he left in the 1970 census it was probably, just a second, got it here.

JH He's looking at a book called "San Jose and Other Famous Places" by, oh, someone named Harry Farrell. Strange author.

HF In 1970 it was 445,000 so it had gone up four and a half times in that length of time and now it's up to what? Over 700,000.

JH Yeah, approaching San Francisco.

HF Dutch had a lot to do with this because he was a salesman, he was a guy who wanted the city to grow. He did not start but he accelerated the great annexation movement we had here. They had annexations going at 15 or 20 a month.

BH Well, San Jose Manifest Destiny was just to see how far strip annexation became an example of San Jose. You go to other places in California and they'll often cite they don't want to become an example of what San Jose did.

You would go down the Monterey Highway and it would be the City of San Jose for 50 feet on each side of the street and that was it. But the Dutch Hamann era and Ray Blackmore as Chief of Police, when they left that really ended an era. Everything changed after that point. The City Manager ran government in this city, it wasn't the mayor, it wasn't the council and there wasn't an elected mayor at that time.

JH And so we'll talk about how that transition took place and try and bring ourselves up to date before we're through as we're talking about the development of San Jose here on Jan Black's Journal, KCBS News Time, 212.

(Station Break for Commercials.)

JH Welcome back to Jan Black's Journal. We're talking about the development of San Jose. Our guests are Harry Farrell, a former political writer and editor of the San Jose Mercury, and Bob Hallman. You recognize him, he's the KCBS morning weather and traffic expert and long-time Santa Clara Valley resident and reporter. If you want to join our discussion you can do so by calling toll free 800-228-KCBS. Has San Jose developed in the way that you think it should have. You're welcome to join us with your calls on that matter.

When we left we were talking about the end of the Dutch Hamann era which you both said changed San Jose greatly. What's happened since then?

BH Well it's changed dramatically and there's a whole new cast of characters and a whole new way of playing ball. During the Hamann era there was an organization called the "Book-of-the-Month Club", which I think Harry will remember, that was made up of the leaders of San Jose, the business community-type leaders, who literally decided the way which streets would be one way, which streets would not be one way, what would be developed and what wouldn't. And they would meet and they wouldn't allow anybody in who wasn't a member of the Book-of-the-Month Club. I was working on a television assignment and we wanted to get some of the information. We sent a reporter out and they were physically removed from the room. But those days and when Dutch left that's when things started to change. People whose names that you'd never heard of before really started to enter into politics. It's one thing about San Jose, if you notice carefully. A big city like Chicago, there are people who are in politics all their lives. There are people here now that I'm sure have been residents of San Jose a long time who couldn't tell you who the first elected mayor of San Jose was and it's not that long ago, let alone who he

ran against. There was Ron James and he ran against Bob Welch, who was a councilman at the time. There are people who don't remember that. There is not a collective memory around here and it's one of the problems, I think, with identity. A few years ago, quite a few years ago now, Dr. Bruce Ogilvey -- you may know him at San Jose State, he used to be a consultant to the Forty Niners, psychologist -- did a study for the television station I was working for to find out why people wouldn't associate themselves with the local station, why San Jose people insisted on listening to San Francisco radio stations and San Francisco television stations. And Bruce came up with this that people here didn't have an identity, they don't know enough about the history of this area and what went on and as a result didn't have that interest and it's hard to get them into it. Go ahead Harry.

HF One of the things that San Jose up until recently had to fight against is an inferiority complex and they really shouldn't have an inferiority complex because this was actually the first civil settlement in California that was set up to support....

JH The first state capital too.

HF The first state capital, too, but long before that it was a civil settlement set up to support the Presidio of San Francisco which was an army camp somewhere up the road and we were the support for the whole thing. But then we began to fall into the shadow of San Francisco, which had its tremendous growth, and as recently as let's say -- well it's the 1960s -- this was quite a problem. I was covering the State Capitol in those days and if anybody's been in the State Capitol they know there's a display window up there in the main corridor for every county of California, there's 58 of them, and you know it was set up by the Chamber of Commerce with pictures of what we had here, but the slogan we had was "Only 45 minutes from San Francisco." (Laughter) We weren't bragging about ourselves, we were bragging about how close we were to San Francisco. Well now we had many things even in those days that San Francisco didn't have and we're getting more of them all the time. Not to knock that down but I mean when you've got such an inferiority complex that you brag about how close you are to somebody else that some psychologists might....

JH That kind of relates, Bob. Isn't one of your pet peeves when they call this the South Bay?

BH Oh absolutely and I think if there's ever been a put-down

in the world it is that. Now I started in the broadcast business here in 1965 through 1980 and there were no San Francisco stations interested in what happened in San Jose. Secondly, they might call you and find out whether you happened to have some film of something that happened, never would send anybody down here. It's when they started to realize what the economic growth and the financial status of this area was that they started to send people down here. And it was the perspective from San Francisco that this is the South Bay. Now when you live in the South Bay you don't call San Francisco the North Bay but it was always someone's sending someone to the South Bay. I grew up around here and I know there are many, many people in Santa Clara County who have never seen the Bay let alone (laughter) -- I mean, it is not as if the Bay is a hugely important part of everyone's life. It's not like Back Bay Boston, it's not we're the Bay like Biscayne Bay or it is part of your life, it's not but it was the point of reference from San Francisco. And it has stuck to the point, and it's a media driven created thing, that very few people except KCBS refer to this as the Santa Clara County Bureau. You don't call San Francisco -- we have someone in San Francisco -- you don't call them your North County Bureau or your North Bay Bureau and I think this is one of the things that's been really a put-down. And I've tried to

refer to this as the Santa Clara Valley, I don't even like the Silicon Valley. This was referred to as "The Valley of the Heart's Delight" for many years and I like that. I realize that's a little shmaltzy now, it'll never stick. But this South Bay thing is something that has now been branded on San Jose and that's what it is and it's hard to convince the people in Morgan Hill they're part of the South Bay (laughter). They're Santa Clara County.

JH Well, when you talk to me you're preaching to the converted because I remember working in San Francisco television stations and thinking, "I can't go clear to San Jose, that's too far."

BH It used to be punishment duty. To tell a reporter in San Francisco that he was going to San Jose, you know, San Jose! You're going to Siberia (laughter).

JH We're going to continue our discussion about the development of San Jose and the way the area has changed here in the Santa Clara Valley with our guests Harry Farrell, a former political writer and editor of the San Jose Mercury, and Bob Hallman, KCBS morning weather and traffic expert and long-time Santa Clara Valley resident. KCBS news time at 2:22.

(Station Break for Commercials.)

JH Welcome back to Jan Black's Journal. Jan Hutchins sitting in for Jan while she's on maternity leave. I hope you're having fun wherever you are because we're having a ball here. I'm talking with Harry Farrell, former political writer and editor of the San Jose Mercury, and Bob Hallman, KCBS morning weather and traffic expert. He's a long-time Santa Clara Valley resident and reporter. And it's a delightful conversation we're having. If you'd like to join us, you can dial us up at 800-228-KCBS that's toll free. In fact, Russ has done so. Russ from San Jose, you're on KCBS.

Caller: Yes, hi. Bob brought up the subject of listening to or watching San Jose versus San Francisco stations a while ago. And as far as I'm concerned, KCBS should have never left San Jose because even still now that they're in San Francisco they're about the only station in the area where you can really get any local news about San Jose. The San Jose local stations don't provide anything, even when it comes to the TV channels, Channel 11, Channel 36.

JH We know best.

Caller: That's why there's ten percent of their time to local news at the very most.

BH Well you know, it's kind of interesting because I remember going through all kinds of stages in the broadcast business in San Jose trying to solve this problem of why people wouldn't watch the local stations and it always included, on some sort of cyclical schedule, a return to a San Francisco segment or opening a San Francisco Bureau and you just ended up diluting what you were doing so the best thing a local station can do is its own news in its own community. That's what it's best at and that's where it is. But you're right, KCBS started here in San Jose.

HF Yeah, it was KQW and KQW, I believe, was the first commercial station in the United States going back to around 1909 or some time. There are people who are better authorities but I think their studio was on the top floor of what was then the Garden City Bank Building at the corner of First and San Fernando Streets. It later became the American Trust Company and Wells Fargo; it's been torn down now. But they were here clear until after World War II and then they became KCBS with a transmitter out here on the bay so there's quite a radio history in this city.

JH Good. I was going to try and get one more caller in but instead we have to take a break. Hope you're enjoying our discussion about the development of San Jose and the Santa Clara Valley. KCBS news time 2:29.

(Station Break for Commercials.)

JH Jan Black's Journal, Jan Hutchins here sitting in for Jan while she's on maternity leave. We're broadcasting live from the Fairmont Hotel in San Jose and we're talking about the development of San Jose and the whole Santa Clara Valley. Our guests are Harry Farrell, a former political writer and editor of the San Jose Mercury, and Bob Hallman, KCBS morning weather and traffic expert. You can join our discussion by calling 800-228-KCBS. Jose from San Jose, you're on KCBS.

Caller: Buenos tarde, amigos.

JH Ah, bien.

Caller: Mi nombre es Jose in ciudad San Jose. How you like them apples?

JH I'm loving it, go ahead.

Caller: Hey, any of you three gentlemen know who counts the heads? The reason I asked, Channel 11 had a picture of a sign on a freeway that showed the population of San Jose at 737,400. If that's correct, that population is greater than the city and county of San Francisco according to the 1980 census. Who counts the heads? And what is the present population of SF?

JH That doesn't surprise you, does it, that San Jose would be bigger? Go ahead, either of you guys know?

HF Well I think that every 10 years the Bureau of the Census counts the heads and in between it's the State Department of Finance because a lot of the distribution of state taxes, particularly the automobile taxes, is decided on a population basis so they have to have a pretty well updated figure on that because things change so much between the 10-year censuses. But generally speaking, the latest figure probably at this point in the decade comes from the State Department of Finance.

JH Harry, you worked for the Mercury News for years and it was, once the Book-of-the-Month Club was out of power, the main influence in the area, wasn't it? How has the Mercury News exercised its power?

HF Well the Mercury News has exercised its power in many ways. I think there's been some changes over the years. Joe Ridder, the Publisher of the Mercury from about 1952 to the middle '70s, was a member of the Book-of-the-Month Club. The Book-of-the-Month Club was a group of power brokers.

BH Actually made up of power brokers but many of them were contractors. They would sponsor a campaign for a bond issue to build roads. Well then the bond issue would pass, they'd put up some money to pass it, then many of them would get the contracts to build the roads. Joe was a great booster for the area for growth in the area and the paper is still a booster for the area but I think the emphasis has changed where the paper is no longer an automatic booster for everything that would make the area bigger. There are that type of changes but any newspaper is going to be a booster for its area.

BH Well they had such a lock on the situation down here. They were really the only newspaper. You had the Palo Alto Times in the northern portion of the county but you had the Mercury News down here and the story that I remember being in sort of a competing media, to show you what kind of strength the paper had and what they would push and what they wanted to get through, was San Jose

was anxious to get anything -- this was before Silicon Valley -- give me a business! We had IBM and for years and years IBM was the last major business to move into Santa Clara County. We wanted anything, we wanted growth. Swift was coming to San Jose, the big meat company. They were going to build what they called a meat packing plant. At this time the Mercury News was downtown and just moving out to where they are now on Ridder Park Drive. They didn't want that plant because it was going to be out near their new facility and, as a matter of fact, they would be down wind of this facility (laughter). Now Swift called it a meat packing house. Harry Farrell got that corrected very quickly because every story reference to that facility after that point called it a slaughter house, which really it was (laughter) and there was an elaborate trip to go visit another Swift facility someplace. But Harry spearheaded this drive and suddenly there appeared this home owners organization that was fighting. Now I'm trying to cover the story and we're looking for this and the city is anxious to attract it but gee it's hard to go against all these people who're going to live out there. I'd like Harry to pick up the story there and tell me because at the time I kept trying to get ahold of this Home Owners Association; I'd like to go visit them and go to one of their meetings and see what was going on. What was the

Home Owners Association, Mr. Farrell?

HF At that time I lived down at.... (Note: At this point there is a gap in the recording of about 30 seconds.)
.....I think you just named me the president of it (laughter). Well, that's how I got moved into it and I had a meeting that weekend, I think, in my garage (laughter) of 10 or 12 of my neighbors and we thought the thing to do was immediately to legitimize the thing and we went out and got 315 signatures on a petition against the meat plant that weekend and it took off from there. And then home owners organizations all over the county began coming in. This was probably the most popular campaign that the Mercury News ever ran because nobody wanted that slaughter house -- I was going to say "meat packing plant."

BH Yeah, very careful about that.

JH Let's take one call before we have another break. Mike in San Francisco you're on KCBS. Mike in San Francisco? Is not on KCBS, but KCBS news time is, 2:40.

(Station Break for Commercials.)

JH Back to Jan Black's Journal. I'm Jan Hutchins sitting in

for Jan while she's on maternity leave. Our guests are Harry Farrell, a former political writer and editor of the San Jose Mercury, and Bob Hallman, the KCBS morning weather and traffic expert. We're talking about the development of the South Bay and joining us is Perry from Placerville. You're on KCBS.

Caller: Hi, I'm _____. One comment is that I really lament the fact that Bob Hallman can no longer broadcast his weather by looking out the window at the cows and the horses as he did in the old times.

JH I agree.

BH I lament that sometimes myself.

Caller: And also that the answer to one of the previous questions is the Population Research Unit of the State Department of Finance. It does intercensal work, I used to work there. And finally the question. I attended both San Jose State and Stanford in the early and mid '60s and the smog used to back up from the Fiberglass Plant on down into San Jose. How bad is it now? And what has occurred climatically since I left.

BH Well I remember that I was flying an airplane and doing

traffic reports when the Owens Corning Fiberglass Plant used to....you'd take off and all of a sudden you'd be IFR on instruments at the end of the runway. I can remember going away to college in 1960 and I don't remember smog in the Santa Clara Valley and when I came back it was here. We've improved in a lot of ways over the years. The air quality has actually gotten better. I remember many, many summer afternoons when I was flying traffic reports back in the '60s that I couldn't fly because the visibility would be so bad from air pollution. So the visible pollutants, I know, have cleared up somewhat. We're in this terrible basin down here where the prevailing winds are from the northwest so whatever is produced upwind from us we get and it backs up, it hits the hills down here and we have big concentrations of it. Practically the same thing happens over in the Livermore Valley. But it has gotten better, at least to my way of thinking. I know the visibilities have improved considerably. I had just all kinds of fears that this was going to turn into a Los Angeles and I guess the air quality people around here have a lot to really be thankful for for what they were able to do. But I remember the Fiberglass Plant on its own produced enough smoke and pollutants. When you took off through it you could smell it, you couldn't see and when they cleaned that operation up it seemed to make a big

difference.

JH Mark in San Francisco, you're on KCBS.

Caller: Well I was just wondering if you'd be interested in a reminiscence about 30 seconds of a guy who used to be an announcer on KQW.

JH Please, sir.

Caller: I'll tell you how fond we were of the fact that the transmitter was in San Jose. The station breaks always used to be "KQW" and then you'd darn near whisper "San Jose" (laughter). "Serving the San Francisco Bay area with studios in the Palace Hotel." In those days the announce staff consisted of Joe Walters, Paul Avery or Paul Ware, Bob Jared and one Don Mosely was News Manager for a long time. He came in a little bit later but he's the only member of the staff, I think, that was back in the old Palace Hotel studios.

HF I don't know the exact years you're talking about but....

Caller: Pre-World War II.

HF Was that the time when you had two towers down in San

Jose? One of them was....

Caller: You know, I never got to the transmitter so I can't really answer you. I stayed pretty much around the studios at the Palace.

HF Well, the original studios in San Jose, going back to the '30s and early '40s, the transmitter was right downtown. There were two towers, one of which took off from the front door of the First Baptist Church. I mean it was there instead of a steeple, they had a tower of KQW and on the other end of the block was the other tower. Now I don't remember exactly when that ended but the transmitter later moved out on the Bay someplace.

Caller: I'll tell you who can confirm that is a fellow named Gordon Greb, who is at the San Jose State Journalism Department and he's making a career of trying to establish that KQW predated KDKI Pittsburgh, first commercial station in the country. That's my contribution. Time is running out on you guys, I know, so I'll leave you alone.

JH Thank you, sir.

Caller: You bet you.

BH Jan, I'd like to bring something up, too, that really never even surfaced here until, oh I guess it was on the Fortieth Anniversary of the lynching in San Jose that took place in 1933. If San Jose ever had a black mark it was that incident, it may have been the last lynching and hanging -- lynching is actually the act of taking somebody from custody and then the hanging of two people involved in the murder. I did a TV story on the anniversary and was sent down to Duncan O'Neill's office to try to explain to him why we were bringing this up again, but it's a fascinating story, bears a lot on the history of this area and the county and the people who were there, many of them were the power brokers later and the politicians.

JH When did this happen?

BH 1933, right Harry? And Harry Farrell is in the process of writing a book on it and I think it's going to be one of the most interesting books ever written.

HF This whole thing took place in 17 days in November of 1933 from the time that Brook Hart, who was the son of the Hart's Department Store family here, was kidnapped until his kidnappers, who were both local men, were lynched in St. James Park and it was certainly the

biggest story that ever appeared in San Jose. An interesting thing is that every year the Associated Press picks its ten biggest stories of the year -- this is 1933. The Hart kidnapping and the lynching was number six and number nine was the coming to power of Hitler in Germany.

BH That's amazing! But there was a movie made of that, a "B" movie, based on this story and it just wasn't talked about. And it's amazing the lack of collective memory of the people who were there as to who was there, who did what.

HF Well, there were about, depending on what paper you read, there were from 3000 to 20,000 people there, many of them still alive but none of them will ever tell anybody any other name of anyone else they saw in that park that night. There's still a little....

BH Conspiracy.

HF Conspiracy to cover it up.

JH We'll continue our discussion of the growth of San Jose after our business editor, Don Wiegant, reports from the Pacific Stock Exchange. KCBS news time, 2:50.

(Station Break for Commercials.)

JH Welcome back to Jan Black's Journal. We're talking about the development of San Jose with Harry Farrell, a former political writer and editor at the San Jose Mercury, and Bob Hallman, the KCBS morning weather and traffic expert and long time Santa Clara Valley resident and reporter. Bob, you were here, both of you actually, during the development of the whole high tech and Silicon Valley industry. It developed probably obviously because of Stanford?

BH Stanford certainly had a big part of it, of course the Hewlett-Packard story and Varian Associates. I can remember when Varian was in one little building right off the El Camino in Palo Alto. Of course, you know, an area that really doesn't get enough attention is the impact that Moffet Field, the Naval Air Station at Moffet Field, had. It's a separate community, it's almost another city. There's 100,000 people there, 100,000 people that rely on Moffet Field, either active duty or retired. And there were a lot of military people who came out here, saw the Santa Clara Valley, liked it, who were Annapolis grads, college people, that moved out here and moved into that military/industrial complex sort of. And when the Holthouses sold their cow facility out there and it

became Lockheed, things just started to grow. And it was almost an overnight thing the way it happened. People that I had never heard of before were all of a sudden coming in with the capital and things just grew, things just went amazingly out of control. It was almost like an out-of-control situation. And everything changed, the politics changed, everything.

(End of Side 1, Tape 1.)

(Beginning of Side 2, Tape 1.)

BH Everything changed, the politics changed, everything changed just almost overnight. New types of people, new types of thinking, we went from the orchard culture, what we called the "Orchard Culture" to this high tech culture just in a very sweeping change.

JH For the better of the community?

BH Well, the impact of trying to handle it, I think, has been a real problem: the tremendous growth, the price of houses, who can afford to buy a house around here anymore. You have to have an astronomical salary.

HF You know, I don't think you could say it's for the better

or the worse. It's a different kind of community. There are people who like to reminisce about the old days and how good it was when we had nothing but blankets of orchard blossoms from the hills on one side to the other and that was great. But I think that today we've got things going too that have made this valley one of the key spots in the whole United States and the world in technology and that's good, too -- a different kind of thing.

JH One last comment after this break. KCBS news time, 2:56.

(Station Break for Commercials.)

JH Welcome back to Jan Black's Journal. We don't really have much time to do anything but thank our guests who are Harry Farrell, former political writer and editor at the San Jose Mercury. Harry has written several books -- San Jose and Other Famous Places -- and he's also involved in writing a book about the famous hanging you may have heard us talk about earlier. And then Bob Hallman, KCBS morning weather and traffic expert, long time Santa Clara Valley resident and reporter who you hear regularly on KCBS so you'll hear him soon. Also Taleta Broido(?) on the staff at the San Jose Fairmont Hotel here, to our Producer Andrew Van Lacen, and

Charlotte Lance back at the studio. To those making this remote work, Shingo Kamada and Jim Colton.. Of course we thank you for listening and joining us with your calls. Monday on Jan Black's Journal we'll talk about the impact polls have on elections and how to get the best service from a lawyer. I'm Jan Hutchins. I'll see you tonight on TV 36 News at 10. Right now let's go to the KCBS News Room and Barry Simmons.

(End of Side 2, Tape 1.)

(End of Recording.)